

Two Virginia Boys Are Veterans of RAF Raids Over Europe

Say Anti-Aircraft Fire,
Not Night Fighters, Is
Biggest Opposition

By a Staff Correspondent of The Star.
CANADIAN BOMBER STATION IN ENGLAND (By Mail).—Two Virginia boys in the Canadian Royal Air Force, recently removed their combat attire after a successful major raid on Essen, Germany.
Shortly before both Flight Sgt. L. I. Thomas of Hillcrest West, Richmond, and Sgt. J. R. Sipple of Plymouth, Va., had gone on a raid over Stuttgart which had been even more perilous.
Sgt. Thomas is the son of a former director of the Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey and god-son of the late Admiral Mark Bristol of Washington. Since he came to England 15 months ago he has taken part in 20 operations, starting with the 1,000-plane raid on Cologne last April. Just out of high school he started his career as a soldier with the Canadian Black Watch, but he says, "I soon got tired of digging ditches and shoveling snow. I was asking for."

Fighter Had Searchlights.
"The first 10 trips I was on we had the bad luck to run into from one to five night fighters every time. Our plane was attacked once by five of these fighters with glaring searchlights mounted in their noses. Jerry has been doing that for the last nine months, but now seems to be giving it up as a bad job. The idea is to blind the bomber crew. The usual tactics are for one to come straight at you with searchlight blazing while another fighter without any lights tries to come in from the side and knock you down."
Caught in the five searchlights the only escape open for Sgt. Thomas was to dive about 8,000 feet. In one of the Cologne raids he was caught twice in the searchlight cones, but the worst experience of all was when the bomb doors were open ready for the load to be discharged and a fighter suddenly came at them from underneath.
The Virginians have plenty of respect for the German defenses in "the happy valley," as flyers here sarcastically call the Ruhr. He has had several trips over Italy and speaks of them disdainfully as "pretty soft stuff."
After the Stuttgart raid, Sgt. Sipple's nerves were shaken, for his skipper, a highly respected officer, was among the rather large group from this station who were killed. But the next night was perfect for a raid, and he was ready to go again.

Flak Is Big Worry.
Sgt. Sipple has taken part in 16 operations. His worst was a daylight raid on Bordeaux by three Canadian bombers. His plane "got shot full of cannon shells," but he himself was uninjured. He also has had a part in several of the Italian raids.
"It's getting so," Sgt. Thomas says, "that we don't mind attacks by fighters much any more. Jerry seems to be scared to death when you start at him. I think he's got a lot of green fighter pilots."
It's the searchlights and the flak they fear, and it is largely a matter of luck whether or not a plane gets "coned" in any of the heavily defended areas. The pilots start out, however, with a good deal of information on what to expect and often are able to avoid a searchlight zone unless the Germans have made a quick change in their arrangements. These are explained, so far as they are known, to everybody taking part in a raid.
Both Virginians say they like the life, in spite of its great dangers. They joined the Canadian force before the United States entered the war, they explain, because they felt it was high time Americans were doing something about it.

Cooking Classes Start For Teen-Age Girls

By the Associated Press.
KANSAS CITY.—Daddy's gone as usual, brother's gone a-bunting (for Japs and Nazis), mother's gone a-welding—and little sister has gone into the kitchen for the duration.
So the Lykins Community Center has organized a cooking class to help teen-age girls do as well on the kitchen range as their brothers are doing on the firing range.
Ages of the first class are 10 to 12. The girls bring their own supplies, cook a meal once a week as their lesson, then dine together as a reward.
Miss Marie Hillman, instructor, expects enrollment to zoom when defense-working mothers catch the idea.

Corn Huskers Donate Day's Wages to Church

By the Associated Press.
FARMER CITY, Ill.—Religion and patriotism go hand in hand in this community.
Forty-five men pitched in to help Lott Warren husk his corn, a prime war crop. They shucked 1,670 bushels in one day and were paid at the rate of 15 cents a bushel for their work.
Their total earnings were \$250.50, which they donated to the Weedman Methodist Church for repairing the church's exterior.

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Romberg Delights Thousands With Vivacious Program

All Numbers Prove Tuneful,
Including His Own Works;
Singers Win Quick Popularity

By ALICE EVERSMAN.
Sigmund Romberg came to Constitution Hall last night and thousands of people who knew and loved his music turned out to greet him, his soloists and concert orchestra. The noted composer was spotlighted as he stepped out on the stage and illumined with its brightness after each number of the generous program he directed. There were several innovations in the presentation of the program, such as the placing of the musicians sidewise on the stage with the conductor half facing the audience near the door at the right, an attractively gowned young woman setting large placards on an easel announcing the selections before each number and special arrangements of the music to make it "not too highbrow, not too lowbrow."
The program, which was the 86th the composer has given, showed him in the role of conductor and as pianist. His genial manner and his great vitality kept the performance at a constant high pitch. The same spirit infused the singing of his soloists, Grace Panvini, Marie Nash and Gene Marvey, and was seen in the orchestra's smooth and fluent playing. Not a large group, num-

bering around 40, the musicians are excellently trained in the kind of effects and the clean-cut delivery Mr. Romberg likes.
The orchestra, under the energetic baton of Mr. Romberg, starred in the greater portion of the program. Their selections were of all kinds, but always tuneful and played with spirit. A medley from Tschalkowsky's works was the first offering and others in the same style featured familiar melodies from Chopin and Kreisler, cleverly woven into concert numbers. Debussy's "Clair de Lune," somewhat as Koe-telanitz plays it, and Herbert's "March of the Toys" were given by request and other popular favorites were Strauss waltzes, songs

from Lehar's operettas and Sousa's "Semper Fidelis" march.
The first performance of Romberg's intermezzo, "Faithfully Yours," had an enthusiastic reception. Its suavely fashioned melody and appealing sentiment were of a high order and it had all the earmarks of Romberg's facility and fantasy. Later, turning over the orchestra direction to Frank Cork, the composer took his place as piano soloist, playing several selections from his own works.
One number on the program was listed merely as "The most popular march in the world" and turned out to be the "Wedding March" from "Lohengrin," much to the delight of the audience.
The charming little soprano, Miss Panvini, who was heard in opera at

the Watergate last summer, sang "Strauss," "Voices of Spring" and a portion of the "Indian Bell Song" from "Lakme." Although the florid opening passages were omitted, her brilliant coloratura was heard effectively in the finale of the aria and in the Strauss song.
Mr. Romberg's seating of the orchestra may have contributed to the uniqueness of the concert but it placed his soloists at a disadvantage for the acoustics of Constitution Hall. Standing so far to the side, even with an amplifier, the voices did not strike the right spot.
The fine, ringing tenor of Gene

Marvey brought rounds of applause after his singing of one verse of Schubert's "Ave Maria" in Latin, "Loch Lomond" and "Waltzing Matilda." The duet, "Tell Me, Daisy," from "Blossom Time" sung with Miss Panvini, was one of the hits of the evening.
Mr. Romberg introduced Miss Nash by saying that he "knows a good voice when he sees it" and the attractive singer was all that the phrase implied. Singing with warmth and vivacity, she took over the last half of the program with the favorite songs from Romberg's operettas, "The New Moon," "Blos-

som Time," "The Night Is Young," "The Desert Song," "Maytime," "The Student Prince" and "My Maryland," including duets from "The New Moon" sung with Mr. Marvey. Although the program was more than two hours in length, no one left until they had the opportunity to hear Miss Nash's expert and charming presentations of the songs they came to hear.

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